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SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA: UPDATE OF WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR INFORMATION
FOR MANDATORY CONGRESSIONAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

REF: A) STATE 00158223, B) STATE 149662, C) STATE 143552

¶1. Requested information about the worst forms of child labor in Ethiopia follows and is organized per ref tel instructions.

¶2. For further references, please contact Political/Economic Affairs Officer Kimberly Wright at: WRIGHTKE2@STATE.GOV

¶3. Incidence and Nature of Child Labor

In 2005, approximately 58.1 percent of boys and 41.6 percent of girls ages 5 to 14 were working in Ethiopia. The majority of working children were found in the agricultural sector (95.2 percent), followed by services (3.4 percent), manufacturing (1.3 percent), and other sectors (0.1 percent). The number of working children is higher in the Amhara, Oromiya, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) and Tigray regions compared with other regions. According to the Ministry of Social and Labor Affairs (MOLSA), many Ethiopian children work for their families without pay. In both rural and urban areas, children often begin working at young ages, with many starting work at 5. In rural areas, children work in agriculture on commercial and family farms, and in domestic service. Children in rural areas, especially boys, engage in activities such as cattle herding, petty trading, plowing, harvesting and weeding, while other children, mostly girls, collect firewood and water. In urban areas, many children, including orphans, work in domestic service. Child domestic workers work long hours, which may prevent them from attending school regularly. Many feel unable to quit their jobs and fear physical, verbal, and sexual abuse from their employers while performing their work. Children in urban areas work in construction, manufacturing, shining shoes, making clothes, portering, directing customers into taxis, petty trading, and herding animals. Estimates of the population of street children vary, with the government estimating it to be between 150,000 and 200,000 for the whole country, and UNICEF estimating it to be 600,000 children. In the capital city of Addis Ababa alone, there are an estimated 50,000 to 60,000 street children according to the government, and 100,000 according to UNICEF. Some of these children work in the informal sector in order to survive. The commercial sexual exploitation of children is increasing in Ethiopia, particularly in urban areas. Girls as young as 11 have reportedly been recruited to work in brothels, often sought by customers who believe them to be free of sexually transmitted infections. Girls are also exploited as prostitutes in hotels, bars, resort towns and rural truck stops. Reports indicate that some young girls have been forced into prostitution by their family members. Within Ethiopia, children are trafficked from rural to urban areas for domestic service, commercial sexual exploitation, and forced labor in street vending and other activities. Reports indicate that children have been trafficked from Oromiya and SNNP to other regions of the country for forced or bonded labor in domestic service.

I A. LAWS AND REGULATIONS PROSCRIBING THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Ethiopia has ratified all eight core ILO conventions. Ethiopia's Labor Proclamation (42/93) prohibits children below the age of 14 from working. The same proclamation limits conditions of work for children between the ages of 15 and 18. Children in the 15-18 year old age bracket are allowed to work so long as it is not hazardous to their health or developmental progress. Prohibited activities include transporting goods by air, land, or sea; working with electric power generation plants; and performing underground work. Young workers are prohibited from working more than 7 hours per day, between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m., during weekly rest days, and on public holidays. The law states that children have the right to be protected against exploitative practices and work conditions and should not engage in employment that could threaten their health, education, or well-being.

Age 15 is consistent with the age of primary education completion, while 18 years is roughly consistent with the age of secondary school completion. Article 176 of Ethiopia's Criminal Code identifies minors as age 15 or younger, identifies age 18 as the age of legal majority, and notes that those between age 15 to 18 belong to an "intermediary age group."

The Ethiopian Penal Code outlaws work specified as hazardous by the International Labor Organization (ILO) convention, but the labor law of Ethiopia does not define or specify the worst forms of child labor. The GOE ratified Convention 182 on May 8, 2003. As the Ethiopian constitution states that all international conventions and covenants ratified by Ethiopia are an integral part of the law of the land, the list of occupations listed by the ILO Convention also apply in Ethiopia.

Children are prohibited from working in the following sectors: transportation of passengers and goods by road, railway, air or water; work carried out on dockside and warehouse involving heavy weight lifting, pulling or pushing of heavy items or any other related type of work; work connected with electric power generation plants, transformers or transmission lines; underground work such as mines, quarries and similar work; construction work on high scaffolding; working in sewers and digging in tunnels; street cleaning; toilet cleaning; separation of dry and liquid waste materials and transportation of waste materials; working on production of alcoholic drinks and cigarettes; hotels, motels, nightclubs and similar service giving activities; grinding, cutting and welding of metals; work involving electrical machines to cut, split or shape wood, etc.; felling timber; and, work that involves mixing of chemicals and elements which are known to be harmful and hazardous to health. Most forms of human trafficking have been criminalized under the new penal code; the trafficking of women and children carries a penalty of up to 20 years of imprisonment and a fine. The law also prohibits the compulsory or forced labor of children. The minimum age for conscription and voluntary recruitment into the military is 18 years. While MOLSA is charged with the enforcement of child labor laws, its efforts to provide oversight and resources have been inadequate. Some efforts have been made to enforce child labor laws in the formal industrial sector; however, this was not where most child labor occurred in the country.

MOLSA, in collaboration with local police, is responsible for monitoring trafficking, while the Ministry of Justice is responsible for enforcing laws related to trafficking. In July 2006, the government convicted and sentenced a trafficker to 13 years in prison and imposed a fine.

MOLSA noted that the Ethiopian government is in the process of developing a list of occupations considered to be the worst forms of child labor.

I B. REGULATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Child labor issues are currently covered by a newly formed Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. Courts are responsible for enforcing children's rights. Criminal and civil penalties may be levied in child rights violation cases. According to MOLSA, a

national strategy is being formulated to enforce child labor laws. Due to the absence of a national strategy, investigation and disposition of child rights violation cases is minimal. In 2005, the Forum for the Street Children in Ethiopia reported that only one of 213 child rights cases had been adjudicated in a court of law.

In 2006, MOLSA conducted a national workshop and established a committee to develop a national child labor policy. Ethiopia is one of four countries participating in the 4-year, USD 14.5 million Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia Together (KURET) project, funded by USDOL and implemented by World Vision in partnership with the International Rescue Committee and the Academy for Educational Development. The KURET Project aims to withdraw or prevent a total of 30,600 children from exploitative labor in HIV/AIDS-affected areas of these four countries through the provision of educational services. In 2006, the GOE indicated its support for KURET's Alternative Basic Education (ABE) centers by committing to pay part of their staffing costs. Ethiopia also participates in the 5-year USDOL-funded Reducing Child Labor through Education (CIRCLE 1) global project being implemented by Winrock International through 2007, which aims to reduce exploitative child labor through the provision of educational opportunities.

I.C. SOCIAL PROGRAMS

The GOE encourages children to attend school, but it is not/compulsory. In recent years, the government increased its budget for primary education. A number of schools, particularly in rural and remote areas, have been under construction, while existing schools have been rehabilitated, to maximize capacity for enrollment.

There are not enough schools, however, to accommodate Ethiopia's population of school age children. According to the Ministry of Education (MoE), 77.5 percent of school age children attended school in the 2005/2006 academic year. In 2006 91.3 percent of primary school age children attended school. The MoE goal is to reach 100 percent of children enrolled in primary education by 2015.

The Ministry of Education provided the following primary School completion rates for the 2006/2006 academic year:

| GRADE | GR 5 | GR.8 |
|-------|-------|-------|
| ----- | | |
| BOYS | 69.2% | 50.1% |
| GIRLS | 56.0% | 32.9% |
| TOTAL | 62.7% | 41.7% |

Of the programs that have been implemented in 2006, the Agricultural Federation has designed a new manual, based on ILO curriculum models specific to child and women's labor issues, featuring information about HIV/AIDS.

Another ILO/IPEC program has had some success addressing child labor issues on plantations. The Agricultural Federation and local administration has run stakeholder workshops which highlight the negative impact of child labor in plantation harvest work, while emphasizing the benefits of primary schooling. Plantation owners responded well to the Federation message that child labor negatively affects Ethiopia's international branding and image in export markets. The Federation has noted increased regional government efforts to protect children from harvest labor exploitation.

I.D. COUNTRY POLICIES AIMED AT ELIMINATING WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

There is no particular policy in Ethiopia designed to ensure the effective abolition of child labor or to raise the minimum working age progressively, but there are various economic and social policies that have indirectly addressed the issue. For example, the Ethiopian government initiated an education and training policy aimed at achieving universal enrollment in primary school by 2015. A new National Plan of Action (NPA) is in near final-draft form and seeks to include a component on improving the well-being of Ethiopian children. Little information about the implementation and effectiveness of government policies involving the protection of

children is available however at this time.

E. PROGRESS TOWARDS ELIMINATING WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Child labor is widespread in Ethiopia. A 2001 ILO report estimates that Ethiopia has 18 million children (age 5-17) who comprise 33 percent of the population; one-third of those children combine work and school, while one-half work without attending school. MOLSA reports that 92 percent of children work in households without pay, while 3 percent are engaged in activities other than domestic chores. On average, children work 33 hours per week. Thirty-eight percent confirm that their work affects their schooling. Two in three children indicate that they volunteer to assist with household work, while one in four children indicate they must work to supplement household income. According to MOLSA, two out of five working children in Ethiopia are below the age of six.

Child labor in Ethiopia is generally comprised of children working in subsistence farming alongside their parents in rural areas.

(Note: Eighty-five percent of Ethiopian population is engaged in subsistence agriculture. End Note.) The GOE does not perceive this as a child labor issue as much as a development problem, and therefore tries to tackle it through school construction and agricultural development.

MOLSA's most recent child labor activity data was last generated in 2001:

Table 1.

| AGE | ENGAGED IN PRODUCTIVE WORK | ENGAGED IN HOUSE-KEEPING ACTIVITIES | NOT WORKING |
|-------|----------------------------------|---|----------------|
| 5-9 | 38.9% | 35.4% | 25.7% |
| 10-14 | 62.4 | 32.9 | 4.7 |
| 15-17 | 67.5 | 29.7 | 2.8 |

Table 2.

| EMPLOYMENT TYPE (CHILDREN 5-17) | MALE | FEMALE | TOTAL |
|------------------------------------|------|--------|-------|
| Domestic Employee | 0.4 | 1.8 | 0.9 |
| Employee (not domestic) | 4.1 | 1.3 | 3.0 |
| Self-Employed | 2.2 | 4.1 | 3.0 |
| Unpaid Family Work | 92.6 | 91.7 | 92.3 |
| Apprentice | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.1 |
| Not Stated | 0.6 | 1.1 | 0.7 |

Though the government lacks the resources to provide material assistance to trafficking victims, joint police-NGO child victim identification and referral mechanism operates in the capital. The Child Protection Units (CPU's) in each Addis Ababa police station rescued and collected information on trafficked children that facilitated their return to their families; the CPUs referred 240

trafficked children to IOM and local NGOs for care in 2006. The child protection units also collect data on rescued children to facilitate their reunification with their families. A USAID-funded center in Addis Ababa provides shelter, medical care, counseling, and reintegration assistance to girls victimized by trafficking. NGOs, such as the Forum on Street Children-Ethiopia, provide assistance to children engaged in commercial sexual exploitation, including such services as a drop-in center, shelter, educational services, skills training, guidance, assistance with income-generating and employment activities, and family reunification services. IOM runs a shelter for TIP victims in Addis and partners with ILO on child labor and child trafficking issues. Such assistance often accompanies interaction with the government in order to develop long-term policy and program objectives.

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